

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5016

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 9142

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDIP EG

SUBJ: EGYPTIAN DEMARCHE RE AMBASSADOR HELMY

1. FAHMY SUMMONED ME TO ALEXANDRIA, JULY 5, MAINLY TO RAISE THE MATTER OF JUSTICE DEPT SUIT AGAINST ARAB LEAGUE AMBASSADOR AMIN HELMY. HELMY'S ATTORNEY REPORTEDLY NOTIFIED CLIENT THAT NEGOTIATIONS WITH STATE DEPT HAVE FAILED AFTER ITS REFUSAL TO GRANT HELMY DIPLOMATIC IMMUNITY. AL HAS CONTACTED AMERICAN AMBASSADORS AND INFORMED THEM OF "PROVOCATIVE ACTIONS TAKEN AGAINST THE AMBASSADOR BY ZIONISTS AS WELL AS SOME MEMBERS OF CONGRESS". CASE WILL COME BEFORE THE COURTS WITHIN COMING TWO WEEKS. HELMY, IF CONVICTED, FACES A SENTENCE OF UP TO FIVE YEARS AND A FINE OF \$10,000.

2. FAHMY CONTENDED ARAB LEAGUE AMBASSADORS IN THE PAST HAVE ALWAYS BEEN GRANTED DIPLOMATIC IMMUNITY. THERE IS NOTHING DIFFERENT ABOUT HELMY FROM ANY OF HIS PRECEDESSORS AND GOE FAILS TO UNDERSTAND WHY USG IS PERMITTING JUSTICE DEPT TREAT HELMY IN THE WAY IT IS. HELMY, FAHMY INSISTED, "IS AN EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR ON THE DIPLOMATIC LIST OF THE EGYPTIAN PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UN AND, AS SUCH, HE IS ENTITLED TO DIPLOMATIC IMMUNITY FROM PROSECUTION BEFORE THE COURTS OF THE US".

3. ASKED IF HE IS SURE HELMY IS ON DIPLOMATIC LIST, FAHMY SAID HE IS REASONABLY SURE THAT HE IS. HOWEVER, CONFIDENTIAL

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EVEN IF HE IS NOT, HE CARRIED AN EGYPTIAN DIPLOMATIC

PASSPORT AND SHOULD , THEREFORE, AS A MATTER OF COURTESY
AND RIGHT, NOT HAVE TO APPEAR BEFORE US COURTS.

4. FAHMY MADE STRONG PITCH THAT STATE DEPT INTERVENE
TO "STOP ALL LEGAL MEASURES AGAINST THE AMBASSADOR".

5. I OUTLINED FOR FAHMY SOME OF THE PROBLEMS CONNECTED
WITH THE AL OFFICE AND ITS FAILURE TO REGISTER AS A
LOBBYIST ORGANIZATION. AS I UNDERSTOOD IT, HELMY HAD
ALSO REFUSED TO PERMIT AL OFFICE BOOKS TO BE EXAMINED
AS IS REQUIRED UNDER THE LAW. HE, FAHMY, HAD ONCE
EARLIER TOLD ME THAT HELMY IS PREPARED TO REGISTER.
HOWEVER, THIS HAS NOT BEEN THE CASE. JUSTICE DEPT HAS
THIS PAST YEAR BEGUN A SERIES OF INVESTIGATIONS OF
UNREGISTERED LOBBYISTS AND ARAB LEAGUE OFFICE IS JUST
ONE OF THEM. FAHMY SOUGHT TO DRAW A DISTINCTION
BETWEEN THE ARAB LEAGUE OFFICE PROBLEM AND HELMY'S
PERSONAL STATUS. HELMY, AS A EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR,
HE REPEATEDLY EMPHASIZED, SHOULD NOT BE SUBJECT TO
SUIT BEFORE THE US COURTS.
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